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Contents for Week of January 21, 1929. Vol. VI. No. 26.

1. Krakatoa, Which Fired the Shot Heard Through the World.
2. Piraeus, "Boom City" of Modern Greece.
3. The Uncommon Products the United States Buys From Latin America.
4. Hungary Is the "Middle West" of Europe.
5. Frankfort-on-the-Main, Home Town of the Rothschilds.

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PRODUCTS OF LATIN AMERICAN FIBER PLANTS FIND CONSIDERABLE USE IN THE UNITED STATES

(See Bulletin No. 3)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Krakatoa, Which Fired the Shot Heard Through the World

HARVARD scientists recently announced that the Cambridge seismograph had registered a strong earthquake, the vibrations of which had passed through the core of the earth. Soon it was learned that the vibrations probably came from Krakatoa volcano which had again become active.

Krakatoa has made itself heard before. It has been said that this small island volcano in Sunda Strait, between Java and Sumatra, "made the loudest noise" ever heard by the ear of man.

Krakatoa Snuffed Out 30,000 Lives

The sound of the eruption was heard on Rodriguez Island, 3,000 miles distant, four hours after the catastrophe. Volcanic dust shot 20 miles high, was caught up in a lofty wind and whirled around the earth in thirteen days, creating marvelous sunsets observed in the United States and elsewhere.

The Krakatoa eruption of 1883 raised a tide in South America, 10,000 miles away, and, nearer by, it threw up a wall of water more than a hundred feet high which traveled 400 miles an hour.

Two months before it exploded in 1883 Krakatoa was regarded as an extinct volcano.

No person who saw the eruption lived to tell the story. It snuffed out 30,000 lives. A Dutch pilot who miraculously escaped death at Anjer, 25 miles from the volcano, supplied a vivid account of one effect of the disaster.

"About six o'clock in the morning I was walking along the beach," the pilot said. "Looking out to sea, I noticed a dark, black object through the gloom, traveling towards the shore.

A Vain Race with a Giant Wave

"At first sight it seemed like a low range of hills rising out of the water, but I knew there was nothing of the kind in that part of the Sunda Strait. A second glance—and a very hurried one it was—convinced me that it was a lofty ridge of water many feet high, and worse still, that it would soon break upon the coast near the town. There was no time to give any warning, and so I turned and ran for my life. My running days have long gone by, but you may be sure that I did my best. In a few minutes I heard the water with a loud roar break upon the shore.

"As I heard the rushing water behind me, I knew that it was a race for life. Struggling on, a few yards more brought me to some rising ground, and here the torrent of water overtook me. I gave up all for lost, as I saw with dismay how high the wave still was. I was soon taken off my feet and borne inland by the force of the resistless mass. I remember nothing more until a violent blow aroused me. Some hard, firm substance seemed within my reach, and clutching it, I found I had gained a place of safety. The waters swept past, and I found myself clinging to a coconut palm tree. Most of the trees near the town were uprooted and thrown down for miles, but this one fortunately had escaped and I escaped with it.

"The huge wave rolled on, gradually decreasing in height and strength until the mountain slopes at the back of Anjer were reached, and then, its fury spent, the water gradually receded and flowed back into the sea. The sight of those receding waters haunts me still. As I clung to the palm tree, wet and exhausted, there floated past the dead bodies of many a friend and neighbor. Only a mere handful of the population escaped."

Bulletin No. 1, January 21, 1929.

Photograph from Dr. W. L. Schurz

A TREE FULL OF EGRET NESTS

These birds bearing beautiful white feathers are now safe from the hunter's gun. Egret feathers are still exported from Venezuela but they are now obtained by natives who collect plumes that have been left in the nests during the molting season. In former years great flocks of these snowy creatures covered the banks of Amazonian lakes like a sheet of dazzling white. The plumes are most beautiful in July (See Bulletin No. 3).

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Piraeus, "Boom City" of Modern Greece

IT IS the ambition of Piraeus, port of Athens, to be one of the great ports of the Mediterranean.

One hundred years ago it was a village of 500 souls. Nineteen-twenty-two saw it a city of 150,000. Then in six years it more than doubled its population; today 350,000 people live within the port limits. To its harbor in one recent year came more than 14,000 ships bringing bulky cargoes of merchandise that boost Piraeus toward the enviable position of busy Marseille and Genoa.

Piraeus occupies a peninsula that extends two miles out into the Gulf of Aegina. It is the chief port and chief distributing center of Greece. Piraeus' proximity to the capital causes the seaport to lose its individual prestige, although it is a separate and important municipality, rivaling Athens in size, if not in history.

Corinth Canal Promotes Piraeus Trade

While Athens has been the stronghold of the aristocratic and conservative element in Greece, the citizens of Piraeus have been devoted to industry and trade. Many of the inhabitants are employed in the numerous flour, cotton and weaving mills, engineering and ship-repairing works, and tanning and needle factories. But the principal business of the city is shipping.

Piraeus really has three natural harbors, the largest one on the northwest side of the peninsula being the important anchorage of vessels of deep draft, while the other two on the southeast are less valuable basins for small craft.

The larger harbor is said to be the finest in Greece. It is protected from the sea by long breakwaters built so close together that vessels enter the harbor one at a time. Once inside, one sees a broad expanse of water as smooth as a lake, surrounded by a wide quay that is almost invisible from approaching steamers, due to the presence of hundreds of small craft that are docked there.

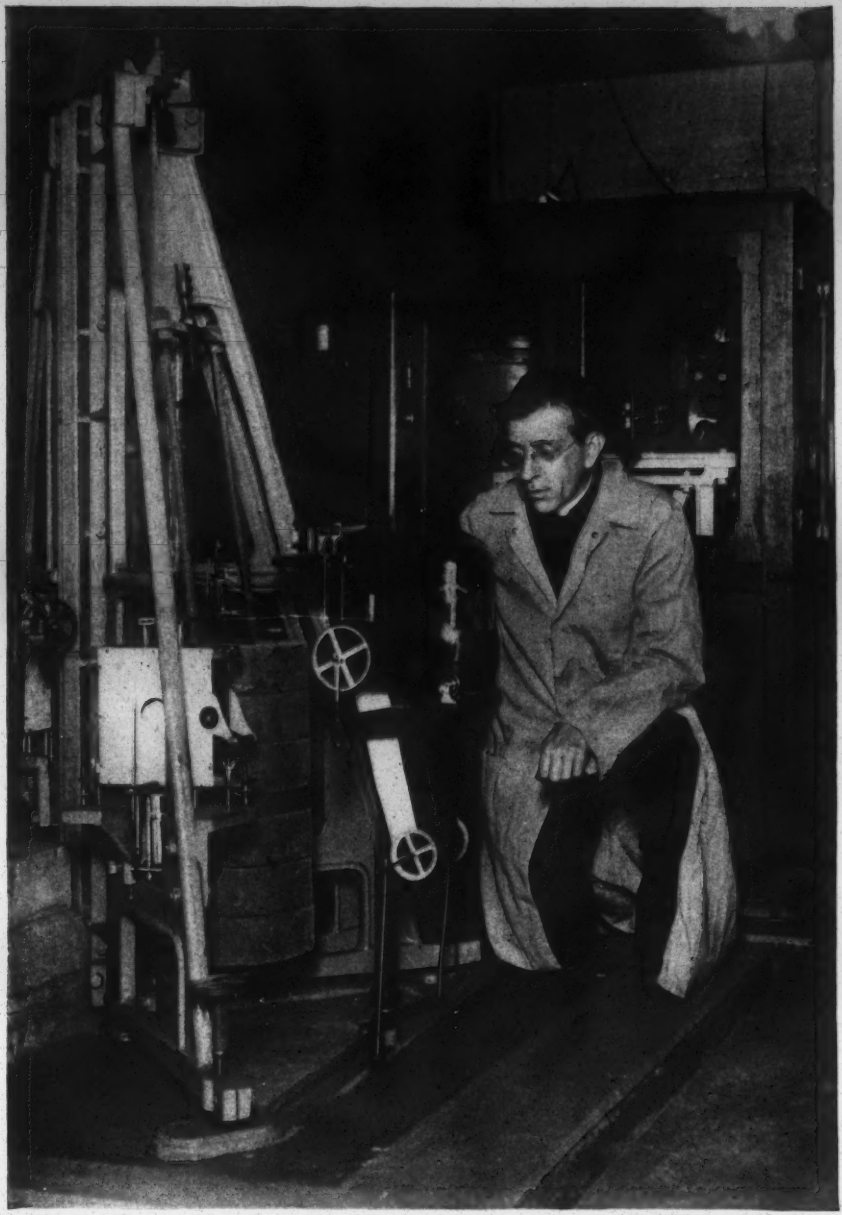
Large ocean-going vessels plying between eastern and western Europe make Piraeus a port of call. It is also an important stop for smaller coastwise craft that are able to use the narrow Corinth Canal connecting the Gulf of Corinth with the Gulf of Aegina. The 4-mile Corinth Canal that was opened the latter part of the last century completely severs Greece, making a through waterway from the Aegean to the Ionian Sea and the Mediterranean. The eastern mouth of the canal is less than 50 miles from Piraeus.

Twenty Minutes by Electric Train to the Acropolis

Athens, the destination of nearly all passengers not bent on trade who land at Piraeus, is about five miles northeast of the peninsula. Tourists usually stop to enjoy the bustle of the commercial activity of the city and are impressed with the wide streets and numerous parks in such an ancient city. But, unfortunately, they find little evidence of the plan of Hippodamus of Miletus who originally plotted Piraeus and who later laid out Rhodes. Several times in its early history Piraeus fell before invaders, some of whom left it in ruins.

It takes twenty minutes to make the run to the Acropolis by electric train, but tourists often prefer to make the journey in an hour's delightful drive, the carriage road following one of the old walls built by Pericles that connected the ancient naval base with the famed center of Attic culture.

Piraeus owes its beginning to Themistocles, "big navy advocate" of the Athen-



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A SEISMOGRAPH AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

In the center of the picture may be seen the band of smoked paper on which the platinum needle inscribes its message of disaster wherever it may occur. Theoretically, the platinum point is so balanced and counterbalanced as always to remain stationary; the smoked ribbon sways with the earth, which is elastic and transmits every quake, however distant.

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The Uncommon Products the United States Buys From Latin America

IPECAC and ox-gall stones, petitgrain and divi-divi, egrets and sarsaparilla, buttons and bismuth, orchids and ixtle.

In connection with the tour of the President-elect much discussion of the products which Latin America sends North America has arisen. Bananas from Costa Rica have been mentioned and coffee from Brazil, nitrates from Chile, quebracho tannin from Argentina, and petroleum from Mexico and Venezuela. Common products have received most attention.

But what of the uncommon exports of Latin America? What of the items in the first paragraph? Why does the United States want annatto seeds, copaiba gum, castor oil, tungsten, alpaca wool, balata, tonka beans, Job's tears, molybdenum, ox-gall and kapok?

Consider what strange experiences an American dollar has in Latin America. It sends brown-skinned Indians of the Venezuela coasts to the egret rookeries in canoes to collect the white feathers of molting mother birds. A United States dollar bill has dictated the picking of leaves from the orange trees near Yaguaron, Paraguay, and orders their distillation which releases petitgrain, an oil with the smell of orange blossoms for use in perfumes and soaps. It has prompted the shearing of alpacas by the heirs of the Incas who own the flocks; and the collection of balata sap from a type of rubber tree that grows deep in the jungle. It has sent men searching for emeralds in the ill-charted mountains of Colombia.

Where Platinum Rings Come From

A dollar and many more like it have floated a mammoth, American-built dredge in the Condoto River, Colombia, where the sands yield platinum without which there would be fewer platinum rings.

And candles! Southern areas which have never seen snow contribute to the multitudes of multicolored candles for our winter holiday decorations. Hostesses who light their tables and every church that illumines its altar with the candle's soft gleam are in debt to Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Honduras, Chile or some other Latin American country.

Vegetable waxes are obtained from the leaves and branches of certain species of palm trees and desert bushes. In 1926 Brazil exported more than 12,000,000 pounds of carnauba vegetable wax, of which the United States took 40 per cent. Cousins to carnauba that also go northward to the candle shop are the ceroxylon palm wax of Colombia and the candelilla wax of Mexico. All three of them lend a hand to modern industry, helping not only the candlemaker but also popping up in other guises few persons could guess: phonograph records, insulation for electric wires, tailor's chalk, carbon copy paper, floor polish, shoe polish, sealing wax and dental molds. Probably these vegetable waxes do not enter into the making of the shorter candles, but they do brace the tall ones, keeping them straight and unbending.

Fountain Pens and Telephone Receivers from Cows

Casein is the solid substance of milk and it might have become cheese if it had not been hardened into commercial casein. Milk in the form of casein, to the extent of 38,920,000 pounds, was shipped in one recent year to the United States, where a varied career awaited it. Fountain pens, earrings, "tortoise shell" for tortoise shell

ians, nearly five hundred years before the Christian era. He urged the Athenians to remove the naval base from the unprotected shores of the Bay of Phaleron where it was open to the attack of the Persians and hostile inhabitants of the Aegina Island, to the peninsula. He was unsuccessful until ten years later a rich vein of silver was unearthed at Laurium (now Ergasteria) that placed a large sum of money at the disposal of the state. Themistocles induced the state to spend the new riches to increase the navy and, with two hundred boats, he routed the Persians at Salamis. His victory justified his policies and Piraeus was made the new base of Athenian sea power. Later Themistocles went so far as to attempt to persuade the state to desert Athens for the seaport.

Its Name Disappeared from the Map

Piraeus was wrecked by Sulla, the Roman general, in 86 B. C. and failed to recoup. For centuries its name even disappeared from the map and in its place appeared "Porto Leoni," a fishers' village, which derived its name from a figure of a lion that stood there until the Venetians took it away in the 17th century. It was not until Greece threw off the yoke of the Turks and Athens was again made the capital of New Greece in 1834 that Piraeus once more lifted its head and challenged European seaport cities.

Twice in recent years Piraeus has been in the spotlight. In 1916 the Allies towed the battleships of Greece's modern navy out of the port of Piraeus to prepare them for action, and six years ago, the port city was the haven of thousands of Greek refugees from Asia Minor, who made up history's greatest trek.

Bulletin No. 2, January 21, 1929.

© *Photograph by Harry Drucker*

REFUGEE WOMEN FROM SMYRNA FIND SAFETY IN GREECE

After the expulsion of the Greeks from Smyrna thousands came to Piraeus and Athens where they lived in tents until permanent homes could be built. Many of Piraeus' thriving industries have been developed with this refugee population.

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Hungary Is the "Middle West" of Europe

WHO shall be king?

This is the question that has set all tongues wagging in Hungary. Since 1920 Admiral Horthy, as regent, has been titular head of the kingdom. A number of candidates for king have been put forward and until a decision is reached the kingship problem will outrank all others.

Statesmen at Versailles in 1918 trimmed the skirts of Hungary. They reduced a country as large as Illinois, Indiana and Ohio together, to a country the size of Indiana.

Even the 35,000 square miles left to Hungary was partly submerged real estate; swamps, bayous, and lands subject to flood. Hungary has built dikes which have converted 8,750 water acres into as many productive acres, and it is building more dikes.

The Alfold Is as Flat as Middle West Prairie

The Theiss, not the Danube, is the principal river of Hungary. Flowing through the flat Hungarian plain on its way to join the Danube, the Theiss has twisted itself into a miniature Mississippi. It wanders for 930 miles through a fertile valley only 338 miles long. Severed bends become stagnant lakes, shaped like new moons. Dwellers in the valley, like dwellers in the Mississippi Valley, have had to wrestle with higher and higher floods as cultivation increased.

In many respects Hungary can be considered the "Middle West" of Europe. The region known as the Alfold makes one of the largest plains in Europe. As in the Corn Belt, the arc of blue sky ends as an undeviatingly straight horizon, unmarked save by isolated houses and a few trees. Hungary has accepted the Middle West's favorite crop, corn, and gives wheat a second place.

The Alfold has passed through the same cycle of agriculture as the plains west of the Mississippi. Hungary had its cowboys, too, in the old days. It raised long-horned cattle and sheep for its twin state, Austria. But the plowman displaces the cowboy. Hungarians, like modern dwellers along the Missouri and Mississippi, build dikes to extend their farm acreage.

Farmers on the Hungarian plain live in towns, from which they go out to work in the fields. Their villages have broad streets and separate houses, but the houses do not suggest the cordial welcome of American homes because the builders turn their gable ends of houses toward the street, and the street face contains no windows.

The Danube Throws a Water Dam Across the Theiss

While the Theiss, flowing south to the Danube, creates conditions of a miniature Mississippi, its unruliness has a different cause. Soon after the Theiss joins it, the Danube comes to the narrow pass through the Carpathian Mountains known as the Iron Gate. When spring floods fill the Danube the Iron Gate cannot manage the waters. Then the rising Danube lays a water dam across the mouth of the Theiss. A 13-foot rise in the Danube will back up the Theiss for 87 miles north to Szegedin. Dikes, which were purchased with the millions loaned to Hungary, are expected to reclaim 5,600,000 acres of rich land and add a million tons of grain to Hungary's granary yearly.

Bulletin No. 4, January 21, 1929.

rims, cigarette holders, telephone receivers, and chess men are but a few fates awaiting Argentinian casein. Aladdin rubbed a lamp; chemistry stirred a milk pail and brought forth casein wonders that give the cattle raising countries of South America an outlet for their surplus milk.

Gall stones from cattle have proved as valuable a find as Brazilian diamonds. Sao Paulo a year ago shipped to the United States 3.38 pounds of gall stones valued at $596. Presumably they were resold in Japan. Gall stones take a high polish, and the Japanese prize them as lucky stones.

Many Strange Products Lie Behind "Miscellaneous" in Trade Figures

Each Latin American country has unusual products, often hidden in trade figures behind the blank wall labelled "miscellaneous." Chile exports beeswax and iodine; Bolivia, molybdenum and tungsten (to harden steel), llama wool and ixtle fiber; Argentina, ostrich feathers and senna; Uruguay, grass seed and sausage casings; Paraguay, petitgrain and crude drugs; Brazil, ipecac, moss, seaweed, brazil nuts; Peru, vanadium ore, kapok for mattresses, mohair; Ecuador, annatto seeds, condurango (for medicinal purposes), Panama hats, chestnuts and vegetable ivory (the latter is the very durable white seed of a palm tree which ought to be named the button tree because so many of its seeds become buttons on American clothes); Colombia, cascara, copal gum, balsam of Tolu, brazil wood, ceroxylon wax; Venezuela, divi-divi, copaiba gum, angostura bark, castor oil, tonka beans, cebadilla (reported used for poison gas in World War) and sarsaparilla; the Guianas, bauxite (ore for aluminum), nutmegs, citrate of lime, balata and mahogany.

Bulletin No. 3, January 21, 1929.

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OLD HOUSES IN FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN

Mayer Anselm, founder of the house of Rothschild, was the son of a small merchant in Frankfort. The boy became a money-lender instead of a rabbi, as had been planned, and from the trading counter of the sign of the "Red Shield" (Rothschild) developed a financial institution which became more powerful during the 19th century than any monarch in Europe. It was Rothschild gold which enabled Britain to carry on the Napoleonic wars (See Bulletin No. 5).

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Frankfort-on-the-Main, Home Town of the Rothschilds

FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN is particularly interested in an important new biography, the last volume of which has just been published.

Frankfort-on-the-Main is the home town and the stronghold of the family chronicled in the biography. Mayer Anselm, first of the Rothschilds, was a Frankfort man who sent his five sons to corner the money markets of Europe.

For many years the Rothschilds of Frankfort were the major figures in the politics of Europe. Wars started or stopped at their behest. A Rothschild helped to guarantee the payment of the French indemnity after the Franco-German War.

While the Main and the Rhine offer water transportation facilities to the Netherlands and the sea, and the railroads touching Frankfort lead to the important centers of Europe, and the city's industries are many, yet Frankfort's commercial standing is largely based upon the financial strength bequeathed it by the Rothschilds.

Ancestral Home of Rothschilds Still Preserved

The ancestral home of the Rothschilds at 26 Bernestrasse, formerly Judengasse or Jew Street, is preserved. During the days of Mayer Anselm, Judengasse was closed at night and on Sunday and holidays to prevent the Jews from leaving their district. The gates were torn down in 1806 when the French occupied the city.

Frankfort lies about 24 miles up the Main River from the Rhine. The city has occupied its present site on the north bank of the river for more than 1,200 years. It was called the "ford of the Franks" during the time of Charlemagne, who held an imperial assembly there in the eighth century. The Romer has been Frankfort's city hall for more than 500 years. It is still standing. Several German emperors were elected after stormy sessions in the venerable building.

From a tiny medieval town, surrounded on all but the river side by a high wall and moat to protect its inhabitants from barbarians, Frankfort has prospered until it now nears the half million population mark. In numbers it is almost equal to Washington, D. C.

From early times the city maintained a position of marked independence and in the sixteenth century it became a free city. Unhampered by local principalities, it grew rapidly. The city paid tribute to the emperor alone and received his protection under which, like other free cities, it became a great center of commerce, industry and wealth.

Frankfort Preserves the Home of Goethe

Frankfort was doubled in area in the fourteenth century when "new town," which was also guarded by a wall, was annexed. Then when the modern metropolis was annexed a century ago, the "new town" walls were torn down and in their place a parkway and promenade were built, making a semicircle through the heart of the city.

Little change has taken place in the old town, which stretches along the river bank and for a few blocks inland. The cobbled, canyonlike streets are so narrow in some places that the steep gables of the gaily frescoed houses and shops on both sides meet over the narrow passageway and form a canopy. And they are so crooked that one can seldom see more than a city block before they veer off in another direction.

Now and then there is a square into which many of the streets converge. On one of these squares fronts the Gothic cathedral, one of the few architectural gems of Frankfort. Its 300-foot tower can be seen far up and down the river and

© *Photograph by Erdelyi*

A SHEPHERD OF THE HUNGARIAN PLAINS

The Magyars, the dominant race of Hungary, are a virile people, who were, for more than a century, the defenders of Christendom against the Ottoman Turks. The sleeves of this shepherd's coat are never used, the garment being placed loosely over the shoulders and fastened in front by a short leather strap.

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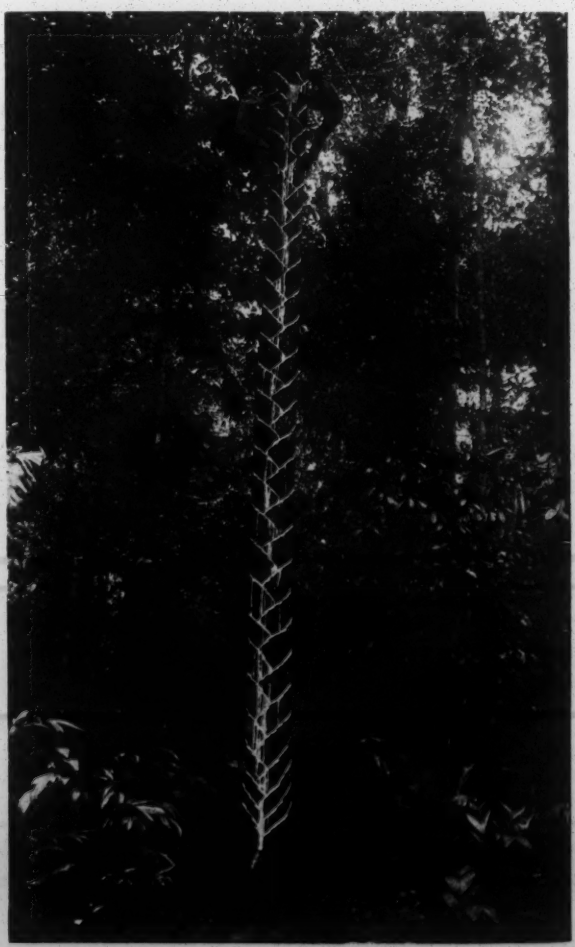
across the fertile plain in which the city lies. The cathedral was founded in 852 and parts of its present construction date back to 1235. Before its altar the emperors who were chosen at the Romer were crowned.

Paul's Kirche (church) occupies another of these open spaces while on the edge of the old town, almost encircled by the parkway and promenade, stands the magnificent opera house in Italian Renaissance. Nearby is the home of Goethe. It has been carefully restored and preserved. Adjoining the house, the Goethe Museum, in the building where the poet was born, contains an interesting collection of portraits and souvenirs.

Bulletin No. 5, January 21, 1929.



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TAPPING A "GOLF BALL" TREE

The balata tree is one of the many rubber trees of the Amazonian basin. Since common rubber is produced commercially in the East Indies Amazonian natives have turned to the collection of balata rubber which is a hard rubber. One of its many uses is as an alternative to gutta percha in the manufacture of golf balls (See Bulletin No. 3).